

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. – 5. (Canceled)

6. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) A method for producing the L-leucine, which method comprises the steps of:

- cultivating the bacterium according to ~~claim 1~~ claim 8 in a medium to produce and accumulate the L-leucine in the medium, and
- collecting the L-leucine from the medium.

7. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 6, wherein the bacterium has been modified to have enhanced expression of a gene of L-leucine biosynthesis.

8. (Currently Amended) ~~The bacterium according to claim 1~~ An isolated L-leucine producing bacterium belonging to the genus *Escherichia*-which produces L-leucine, L-valine, L-isoleucine and L-homoleucine, wherein the amount of L-valine, L-isoleucine, and L-homoleucine produced is less than 1% of that of L-leucine produced, wherein the bacterium is *Escherichia coli* strain 505 which has been deposited in the Russian National Collection of Industrial Microorganisms under accession numbers VKPM B-8124.

9. (Currently Amended) The bacterium according to claim 8, wherein the activity of the protein coded by *tyrB* gene of *Escherichia coli* is increased by increasing ~~a copy~~ the copy number of said *tyrB* gene or by locating said *tyrB* gene under control of a potent promoter.

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENTS

Claim 2 was previously canceled.

Claims 6, 8, and 9 have been amended.

The amendment of Claims 6, 8, and 9 is supported by original Claims 1-4 and 6, previously pending Claims 1, 6, 8, and 9, and the specification at page 10, line 17 to page 11, line 15 and page 16, line 24 to page 17, line 2.

No new matter has been introduced by the present amendment.